

Parent Advisory Committee to the Superintendent (PACS)

May 28, 2015 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Central Services Board Room

Parents: Parents attended representing 15 schools - 9 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and 2 high schools.

Executive Team/District Staff:

Superintendent Greg Baker

Deputy Superintendent Mike Copland

Assistant Superintendent Steve Clarke

Executive Director of Communications and Community Relations Tanya Rowe

Department of Teaching and Learning Director Charisse Berner

Lowell Elementary Principal Missy Ferguson

Parkview Elementary Principal Mylo Allen

Happy Valley Elementary Principal Karen Tolliver

Options High School Principal Byron Gerard

Note Taker:

Sheri O'Day, Executive Secretary to the Department of Teaching and Learning

Welcome:

Dawn Brand welcomed the group and asked attendees to introduce themselves. Trisha Walton is unable to attend today's meeting.

Superintendent's Update:

Dr. Baker also welcomed everyone and thanked Dawn and Trisha for their work facilitating the Parent Advisory Committee this year. He gave the following updates:

- [Graduation Dates for 2016](#): The state requires 180 days of instruction with some flexibility for seniors to end early. Snow days can extend the school year for all students. In high schools, classes are mixed by grade levels and pulling one grade (seniors) early makes providing quality instruction to the end challenging. Instead, we're moving toward having all students end on the same day. With the last day of school in 2016 on a Wednesday, it makes it challenging to determine when graduation should be. We've decided in this circumstance to tentatively hold graduations the weekend before and have seniors end a few days early, unless we have any snow days, in which case graduation will be moved to the weekend after. We will make a decision by March 1, 2016. There was some discussion about the following items:
 - Graduation ceremony locations (this year's Sehome graduation ceremony will be held at Squalicum because of construction at Western Washington University).
 - The expectation of our staff is that we have high quality learning every day, including the last days of school, early dismissals, holidays, days after the high school Advanced Placement (AP) exams, etc.

- **Wellness and Safety Update:** Jessica Sankey will be leading our wellness work. We plan to announce our director of school safety and emergency management soon. These positions are possible through joint funding from the Whatcom Community Foundation (for wellness) and bond support (for safety).
- **Elementary Schoolwide Support:** Several of our elementary schools with larger student populations, more staff to support/evaluate, and or special programs will have assistant principals or deans, ranging from part- to full-time to support students and staff.

Facilities Update:

The following principals gave updates on the progress of four of our facilities projects:

- Missy Ferguson talked about the construction currently in progress at Lowell Elementary and noted that it has been a positive experience. A gym, cafeteria and music room/stage is being added. There is a [construction camera](#) that allows you to see the work in progress. Construction will be completed in August 2015.
- Mylo Allen talked about Parkview Elementary's project, which has some similarities to Lowell. Parkview is our only school without a cafeteria (the gym is used for a cafeteria, and in the afternoon it is broken down to be used as a gym). A music room/stage, new bathrooms and covered play area will be added. Construction will start in June and will be completed in August 2016.
- Karen Tolliver provided an update on the Happy Valley Elementary replacement project. There will be 18 classrooms (Pre-K through 5), an idea lab, cafeteria, gym, music room, stage and covered area. The playground will be located in front of the school. Grade levels will be located in clusters, along with shared spaces. The idea lab is larger than a classroom and could possibly accommodate students from two classrooms as they work together.
- Byron Gerard provided an update on the Options High School/Learning Center rebuild. Options has spent 21 years in portables and currently serves approximately 100 students. A committee is in the midst of creating the vision/concept for the school and facility, which will include Options and other educational programs (vocational, re-engagement, GRADS, etc.) for up to 300 students at the current location on Franklin Street. Construction will begin in the summer of 2016.

Dr. Baker highlighted the other bond projects:

- Safety/maintenance (continues throughout the bond);
- Athletic fields at Squalicum High and Bellingham High (the Sehome High fields will be completed in conjunction with the new school construction);
- Transportation garage improvements;
- Sehome High School rebuild;
- Centralized kitchen;
- Gordon Carter conservation site;
- District office.

Curriculum Website Feedback – What Do Parents Want?

Charisse Berner, Director of Teaching and Learning, reviewed the curriculum websites for the Vancouver and Issaquah School Districts, and then asked parents to give feedback about what they would like to see on our website. Charisse then presented a mock-up of the Bellingham website. Some of the requests from parents included:

- Mobile device friendly;
- Include what students are currently working on (in order to support our kids);
- Links to Agile Minds, etc.;
- To-the-point for visual learners, less text;
- Keep in mind parents would like to get to what they're looking for in fewer clicks;
- Icons would be helpful;
- Does not like the font on the BPS website;
- Short videos rather than text;
- Video showing how to navigate the district's webpage;
- Student friendly;
- Course descriptions;
- Uniformity across schools, departments;
- Knowing what is coming up would be helpful.

Announcements:

- WWU to host Girls in Engineering, Math and Science (GEMS) Fair on May 30, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Parents need to register on Western's website.
- Music Moves Me on June 6, 11:00 am to 4:00 pm at Boundary Bay – music instrument drive, as well as a fundraiser to help fund 6th grade band support. Donation of \$5 at the door.
- Grace Munson will serve as a PAC co-chair with Dawn Brand for 2015-16, as Trisha Walton has finished her second year as a co-chair.

Thank you all for your contributions this year – see you in the fall.